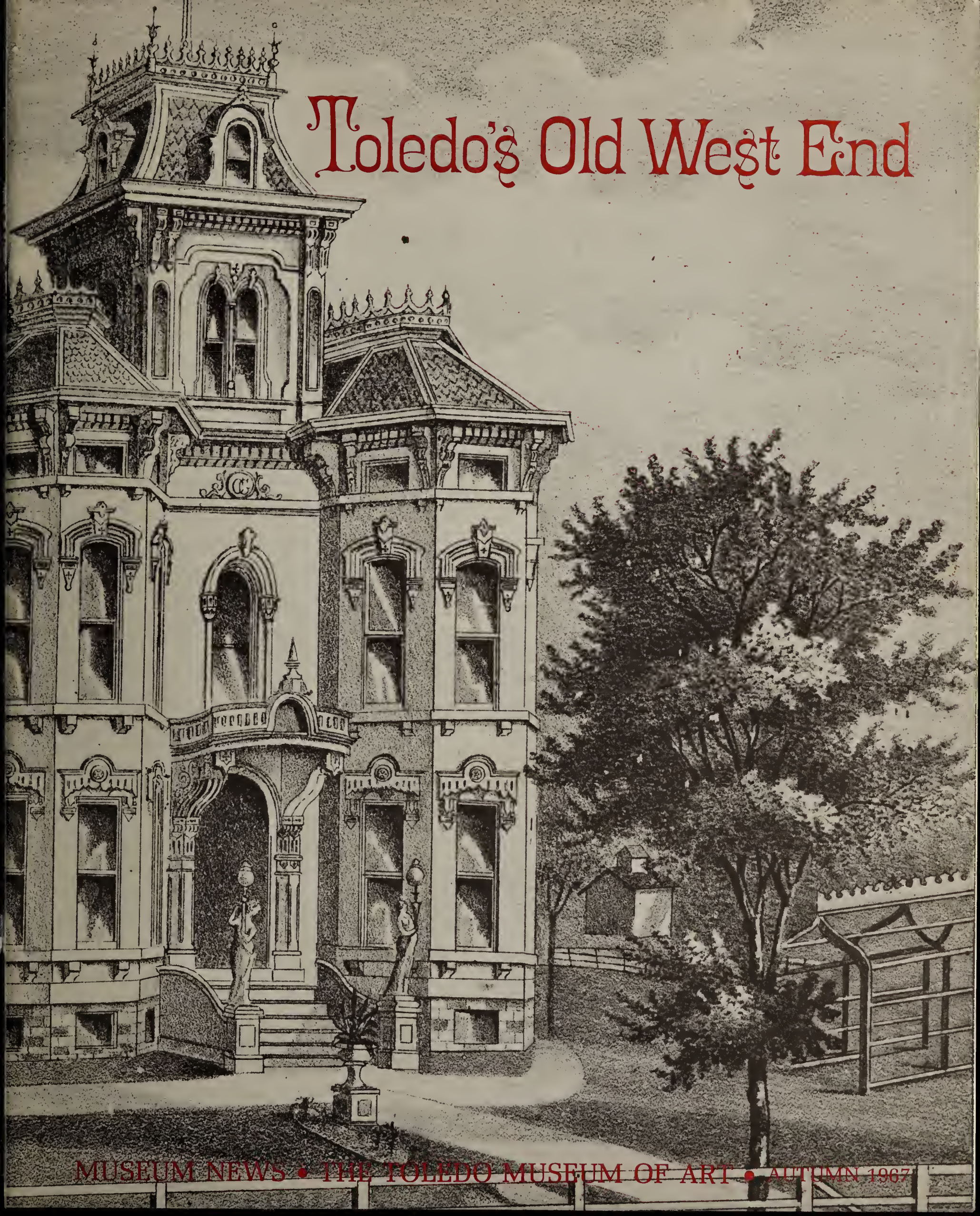


Toledo's Old West End



TOLEDO'S MUSEUM AND ITS NEIGHBORHOOD

This issue of Museum News reviews the history of the Museum's building and the architecture of its neighborhood, Toledo's Old West End. It is appropriate at a time when our city is vitally concerned with urban conservation and renewal.

For more than fifty years the Art Museum has stood on its present site, a lively, useful, attractive cultural center, loved and used by the people of this community, visited and praised by Toledo's guests from every state in the union and from every corner of the world. The treasures it contains and the varied educational services it offers to everyone without discrimination are world famous.

We should remember, however, that Toledo's Museum has stood not only as a friendly dynamic attraction but, also, as a solid element of stability in a neighborhood already well established when the first sector of the Museum was built in 1912.

Can this neighborhood, Toledo's Old West End, survive in an era of growth and change? We think it can and should. The large houses lining the shaded streets form an integral area which represents one of the most important remaining examples of American residential architecture of the late Victorian and Edwardian times.

There are numerous examples in many American cities today where interested civic groups have preserved architecture of such urban areas by thoughtful adaptation to modern uses. It is vitally important to the cultural integrity of Toledo that Toledo's Old West End be preserved as a functional and living element in the city's urban renewal plans.

Otto Wittmann, Director

COVER: GERBER HOUSE, Lithograph, 1875, by Joseph K. French (Detail).



FACADE, 1912

THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE MUSEUM BUILDING

When the Toledo Museum of Art was founded in 1901 by a small group of Toledo citizens under the leadership of Edward Drummond Libbey, its first quarters were in the Gardner Building in downtown Toledo. This location was opened to the public on December 2, 1901, and housed the new Museum's first three exhibitions. The earliest building devoted solely to the Museum's needs was the Brown residence, a large brick house at Madison and Thirteenth Street. Remodeled to include three ample sky-lighted galleries on the upper floor with storage and classroom space on the lower, it was dedicated as the Art Museum on January 19, 1903. It soon proved too small, and wings were constructed on either side giving an additional five galleries. However, the Museum's first director, George W. Stevens, was determined to have a permanent structure built specifically for the Museum.

The new building became a possibility in 1907 when Mr. Libbey offered to provide the site of the Maurice A. Scott estate on Monroe at Scottwood in the fashionable West End. This acreage was filled with great forest oaks and therefore well suited for conversion into the beautiful park planned to surround the new building. It also was centrally located on the main public transit lines. The design of the building was basically due to Mr. Stevens' sensitivity to the needs of combining the functions of a museum and an educational center into one structure which would encourage rather than awe the visitor. The architects employed to turn Mr. Stevens' ideas into workable form were the firm of Green & Wicks of Buffalo, N. Y., assisted by Harry W. Wachter of Toledo. The first portion of the present building was opened on January 17, 1912 with all the ceremony and fanfare warranted by the impressive white marble structure. It must be remembered that by 1912 many major cities in the Midwest

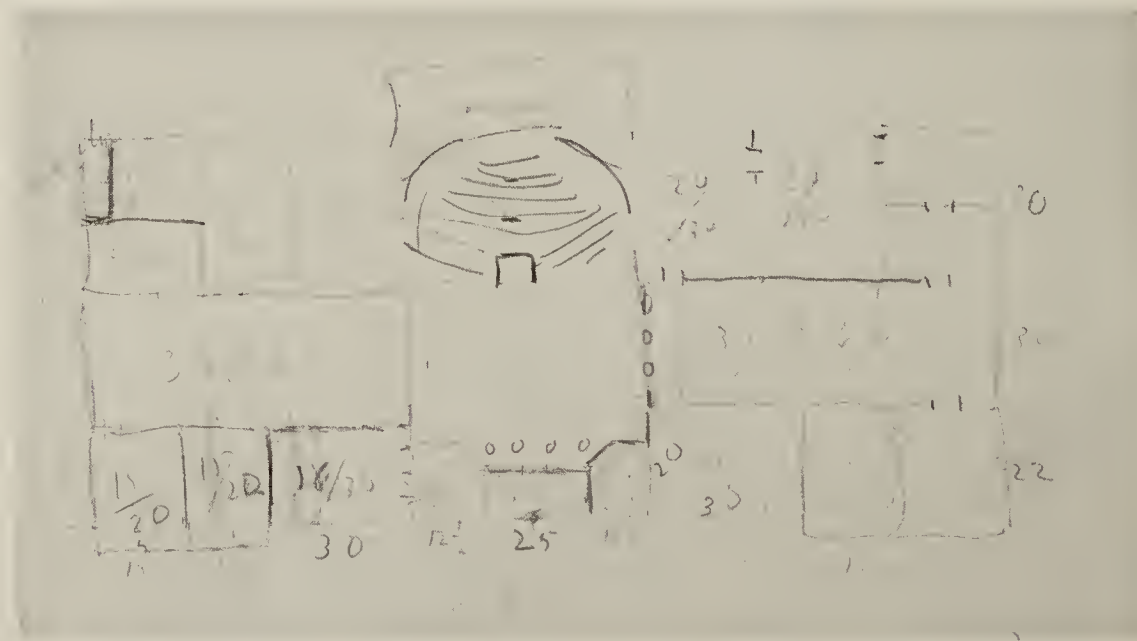
were already bidding for cultural attention by constructing permanent art museums. National acclaim acknowledged Toledo's building to be one of the finest of its kind in the world.

The 1912 section is the front part of the present central portion and contained thirteen galleries, a library, director's office and a 288 seat auditorium called the Hemicycle. The ground floor had rooms for additional exhibition space as well as for classrooms, storage and packing facilities. The main floor galleries, although large enough, were also arranged so that a friendly feeling prevailed. This sense of intimacy has always characterized Toledo's Museum building, unlike many of the other museums built before or during this period, and was due to the theories of Mr. Libbey and Mr. Stevens, that a museum should appeal to everyone.

The exterior of the building anticipated the friendliness of the interior. Although formal in accord with the ideas of the day, it was not pretentious. A wide Ionic colonnade was flanked by unadorned walls, the whole surmounted by a low entablature. Broad steps and terraces, as wide as the colonnade, led up to the entrance. White Vermont marble contrasted pleasantly with the green, luxurious landscaping. Toledo had every right to be proud of its new building. In little more than a decade a dream had become a glistening, solid reality.

The second phase of the building, because of World War I, was not realized until 1926 when enlargements were made to the rear, squaring-out the earlier rectangular structure, and doubling the former exhibition space. The Hemicycle was enlarged to an 800 seat auditorium and formed a center about which were ranged the galleries. The exterior of the rear facade was articulated with a long Ionic colonnade matching the Monroe Street side and giving a formal finish to the rear entrance.

*ORIGINAL SKETCH FOR 1912 BUILDING BY
GEORGE W. STEVENS, about 1907*



The next and most important enlargement occurred in 1931-1933 when, at the request of Mrs. Libbey, construction of the east and west wings was undertaken. These extensions which tripled the Museum's size were anticipated by Mr. Libbey, who made provision for them in his will. Construction was undertaken at this time because of the concerned interest of Mrs. Libbey and the Museum authorities in providing jobs for workers in desperate need during the early years of the great depression.

Edward B. Green, surviving partner of the Green & Wicks firm, designed the formal elements of the extended plan. The arrangement of the interior space was undertaken, as previously, by Museum officials who knew only too well the required needs. Two major elements went into the plan. The first and most spectacular was the great Peristyle, a concert hall with a seating capacity of 1,750; its classical style was entirely Mrs. Libbey's conception. The design of its unique suspended acoustic ceiling was a "first" in American construction and a feat accomplished by the contracting firm of A. Bentley & Sons, Inc. of Toledo. The second element, equally unique but generally unrealized by the average Museum visitor, was the incorporation within the shining new marble walls of space for school class-rooms and future galleries. It is this space that still houses the Museum's world-famous educational program and allows the flexibility and growth of gallery installation. Few other great American museums built during the first half of the twentieth century evidenced such foresight.

To harmonize the wings with the original 1912 facade the formal elements of the main entrance were halved placing shortened colonnades on the Monroe Street projection of each wing. These entrances had the broad steps and terraces of the main entrance, but reduced to fit their abbreviated horizontal scale.

CONSTRUCTION, 1924



The prime purpose of the wings was to provide adequate and suitable space for the all important educational aspect of the Museum. While the Peristyle in the East Wing provided a magnificent setting for the distinguished musical events scheduled by the Museum, nearly the entire ground floor of the West Wing was devoted to the functions of the School of Design and furnished the most modern and comprehensive educational space found in any museum in the world. The model established in Toledo has influenced museum educational planning for the past thirty-five years.

Landscaping has always played an important part in the Museum's planning, and provides an impressive setting for the building. The giant forest oaks of the Scott estate comprise more than half the trees on the Museum's ground and offer a 200 year old stand of virgin timber which is nearly unique in northern Ohio. The great copper beeches next to Monroe Street were over 100 years old when they were planted about 1900. The 1912 landscaping scheme also incorporated extensive planting of additional trees and shrubbery. In 1931-33 the grounds were re-arranged to allow for the new wings. At this time the westernmost copper beech was transported from its original location, and moved on specially layed railroad tracks to its present position next to Monroe Street, a distance of about 300 feet. Other changes included the planting of ancient European yew trees around the broad entrance terraces. The magnificent lawn was the result of a twelve-inch deep specially prepared soil base.

The Museum and its grounds not only form a beautiful setting for its famed collection of art, but also form a rich frame on the southern border of the Old West End.

James Key Reeve

(TOP RIGHT) PERISTYLE DURING CONSTRUCTION, 1931

(BOTTOM RIGHT) GALLERIES DURING CONSTRUCTION, 1931



Plan of TOLEDO

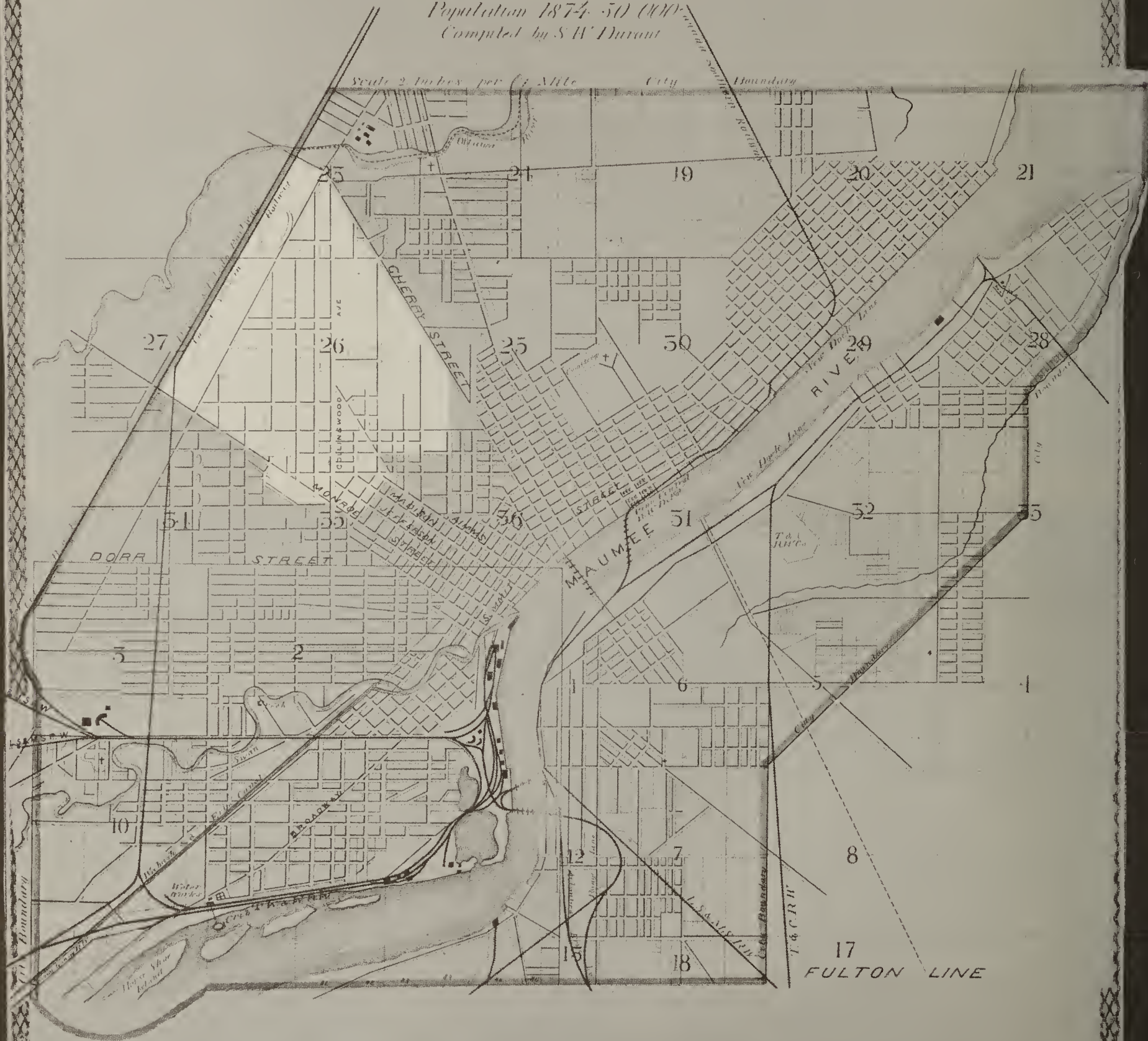
Population 1874 50 000
Computed by S W Durant

Scale 2 inches per Mile

City

Boundary

Boundary



TOLEDO, 1875, map compiled by S. W. Durant



TOLEDO'S OLD WEST END ARCHITECTURE

The gracious tree-lined streets of Toledo's Old West End form a restful setting for a late Victorian and Edwardian urban residential area virtually unique in mid-twentieth century America. Problems inherent with urban growth tend to obliterate these comfortable homes built for an age now vanished. However, owners and some far-sighted city planners have preferred to preserve the architecture by adaption to new uses. The importance of the individual architecture, the landscaping, and the well planned urban design all merit our serious efforts to stabilize and preserve the Old West End.

The development of this tract of approximately 1000 acres began after 1865 when prosperous merchants, and later, industrialists, sought to escape the growing commercialism along the river front. The character of the area was established with over-size ground plots divided from neighbors by park-like landscaping. Unlike the earlier owner-built houses lining the river in Lower Town, the residences were, for the most part, designed by architects. This fact alone drew a group of competent men to the city—architects who were to shape Toledo in the early years of the twentieth century.

Late Victorian architecture is generally referred to as the Age of Eclecticism. In trying to rival the grand architecture of Europe, American architects borrowed ideas from older, highly respected styles. They studied and freely adapted the Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque styles of Italy, France and England. This borrowing, or selective imitation, is called eclecticism.

Indicative of sources Americans used is the still existing library of George S. Mills, one of Toledo's major architects of the period. Noticeable in it are standard works on historic European architecture, ornament and building methods. Equally important are the periodicals publishing the latest trends and the revival of earlier styles by the leading eclectic English and American architects of Mills' day. While the Toledo architect was neither extensively trained or traveled, his library could provide for any contingency which might arise.

What made American Victorian architecture so different from its European counterpart was the use of timber in an infinite variety of ways. The so-called Shingle Style, used extensively by Toledo architects, was a transliteration into wood from the English stone, brick and timber. While Old West End architecture is eclectic, it is not mere imitation but a selective and skillful adaptation in available materials.

Somewhat changed, the Old West End continues to serve the needs of the community. Although chiefly residential, with rising maintenance costs and the attraction of the suburbs, many of the houses now function as apartment buildings, businesses and charities. Cars squeeze through porte cochères intended for carriages; the modern-day hubbub of traffic sounds through the streets; evidence of new life for these old houses is everywhere. The following pages illustrate a chronological selection of its distinctive architecture.

Gill Wright Bentley



*WELKER-WILLING HOUSE, 2307 Monroe Street
architect unknown, built about 1865*

This is probably the earliest house still standing in the Old West End. It reflects the simple row-house style of an earlier era along Toledo's river front.



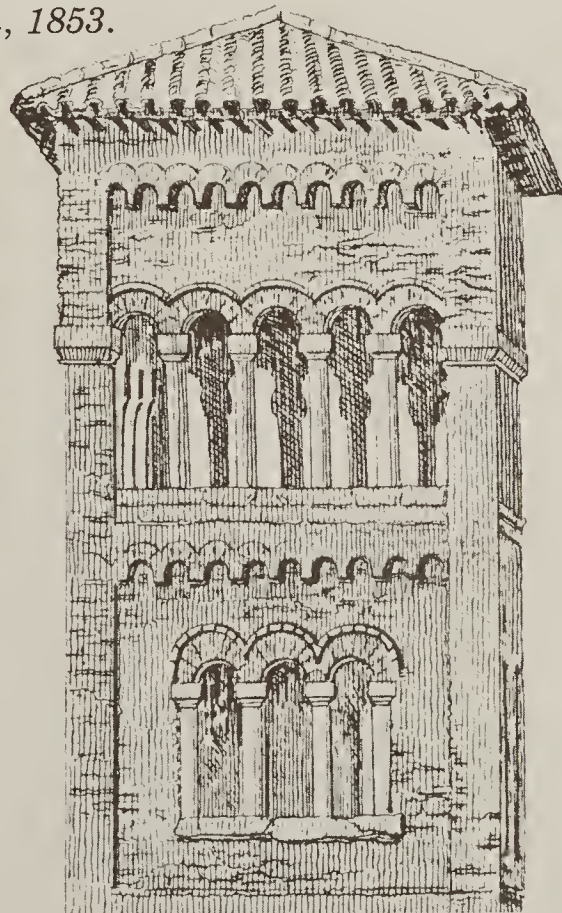
HENRY PHILIPPS HOUSE (Columbia Villa), 220 Columbia Street, architect unknown, built about 1866.

"A Lombardic Tower," from Lectures in Architecture and Painting by John Ruskin, London, 1853.



"An Italian Villa," from Homestead Architecture by Samuel Sloan, Philadelphia, 1861.

Dominated by its tower and heavy roof brackets, this "Tuscan Villa" was favored by many mid 19th century eclectic architects. Its picturesque silhouette was freely adapted from the Medieval architecture of north Italy.





Though more formal and elaborate than the Philipps House, the Gerber House is less picturesque, due primarily to its heavy, ornate detail in the French Second Empire Style. It is the personification of the lavishness of Victorian life. Gerber commissioned his architect to copy a much admired house on Euclid Avenue in Cleveland.

*(LEFT) CHRISTIAN GERBER HOUSE, (Mary Manse College)
2413 Collingwood, Joseph Morehouse, architect, built, 1872.*



*Contemporary lithographic
view of the Gerber house,
1875, by Joseph K. French.*

An excellent example of eclectic potpourri, the Scott House, by contemporary account, was "a happy combination of styles." It mixed elements from the American cottage architecture with the patterned wall surfaces of the Shingle Style.



*WILLIAM H.
SCOTT HOUSE,
2505 Monroe
Street, architect
unknown, built,
1875 (razed,
1929).*



REYNOLDS-SECOR HOUSE (Mansionette Apartments), 2035 Collingwood Avenue, Edward O. Fallis, architect, built about 1887.

The English architect, Norman Shaw, popularized a revival of half-timbered architecture during the last third of the 19th century. In America it was usually rendered in wood shingles or a combination of wood and brick, and called "The Shingle Style." In Toledo it occurs in shingles, clapboard and brick examples. The style is characterized by generous, "wrap-around" verandas, multi-patterned exterior walls, and highly irregular outlines. In the Reynolds-Secor House an informal monumentality is achieved through sheer bulk.

An outstanding example of the Shingle Style on the East Coast.

*T. R. GLOVER HOUSE,
Milton, Massachusetts,
W. R. Emerson, architect,
built, 1879.*





BRIGHAM-BACKUS HOUSE, general view.

*BRIGHAM-BACKUS HOUSE,
2049 Parkwood Avenue, architect unknown,
built about 1888 (detail of entrance).*

A clapboard version of the Shingle Style with tower, fanciful woodwork and stained-glass windows, this well-preserved example continues its useful life as an apartment house.





HENAHAN-BREYMANN HOUSE, 2052 Robinwood Avenue, architect unknown, built, 1894.

This massive sandstone castle was built by the stone contractor, Michael Henahan, for himself. Its Romanesque architectural mode related it to the work of Henry Hobson Richardson, whose Trinity Church in Boston of 1873 won praise through the country.

**TRINITY
CHURCH,**

Boston,

*H. H. Richardson, architect,
built 1873-77, view in 1877.*



A late version of the Shingle Style with wide verandas and bow windows, the unpatterned upper walls introduced a formality which anticipated the Edwardian Era.

*EDWARD D. LIBBEY
HOUSE, (Toledo Society
for Crippled Children),
2008 Scottwood Avenue,
David L. Stine,
architect, built, 1895.*





JULIAN H. TYLER HOUSE, 2251 Robinwood Avenue, Rogers & MacFarland, architects, built, 1897.

Judge Tyler's Detroit architects derived the design of this house from 18th century American Georgian sources combined with the diluted Palladianism which characterized the work of the New York firm, McKim, Mead & White.



Joseph Nightingale House, Providence, R. I. Caleb Ormsbee, Architect, 1792.



*LEEPER-GEDDES HOUSE (Residence of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Toledo),
2116 Parkwood Avenue, Thomas F. Huber, architect, built, 1903.*

*MARBLE HOUSE,
Newport, Rhode Island,
Richard Morris Hunt,
architect, built, 1892.*



One of the most palatial houses surviving in the area was designed in a style widely admired since the building of the White House. Though the veranda is a Victorian invention, Huber's treatment of the bowed element, the detailing and the proportions reflect the late Italian Renaissance architecture of Palladio.



*RUDOLF A. BARTLEY HOUSE,
1855 Collingwood Avenue, Edward O. Fallis,
architect, built, 1905.*

The revival of the French Renaissance style can be noted in the spectacular Bartley mansion. It is obviously influenced by Richard Morris Hunt's residence for the Astor family built as a French château on Fifth Avenue.



*DOUBLE RESIDENCE FOR THE ASTOR FAMILY,
New York, New York, Richard Morris Hunt,
architect, built, 1893.*



*DUNN-BLAIR HOUSE, 2049 Scottwood Avenue,
Mills, Rhines, Bellman & Nordhoff, architects,
built, 1915.*

As the eclectic period in American architecture passed out of style, a more exact duplication of European houses became the fashion. The Dunn-Blair House is the best example of this phase in Toledo. The model was the 1909 addition, by the famed English architect, Edward L. Luytens, to the 17th century English manor house, Temple Dinsley in Hertfordshire. Originally, the roof of the Dunn-Blair House duplicated the English model.

*TEMPLE DINSLEY, Hertfordshire, England,
West Wing Addition, Edward Landseer Luytens,
architect, built, 1909.*



